

HAMILTON BRANCH RAeS MEETING

DATE: WED 25 APRIL 2018

TIME: 19:30 hrs/7.30pm



VENUE: Glenview Club, Peacockes Road. Glenview, Hamilton.

SPEAKER: Our Society member Grant Finlay will give a slide and movie presentation of his own experience at the recent **2018 WARBIRDS OVER WANAKA AIRSHOW.**

NEWS: Last month we given a great slide presentation by Barry Pryor on Aircraft Through The Ages. This period presented aircraft from the mid 1980's to recent days. This was an interesting presentation which also included aircraft of some members.

With ANZAC commemorations coming up, I often reflect on the wastage of lost souls, gallantly lost in both military and civil conflict, and their told and untold stories. Also I reflect on the development of aviation and engineering history through the eras of war and civil periods. The many lives lost during this time also is reflected.

Recently I learned of two Whenuapai air crashes, one in 1942, that of a B17-E Fortress, the 'Texas Tornado', and a B24 Liberator in 1943, both that had crashed on takeoff. These were two separate incidents, with the former on a "secret mission", the latter on a political mission. Last year a TV news item was shown on the crash site of the Fortress, aligned with the main runway, on farmland, that had then exploded when one of the four 500 lb bombs on board detonated, killing all on board. This was the largest air disaster to the then date. This was well presented and can be accessed on line for further viewing. Along with a friend, whom had been investigating this for some time, we travelled to Whenuapai, and visited the crash site on farmland. The site had been investigated last year, by archaeologist Robert Brassey from the Auckland Council, while he had been reporting on building projects for the future of Auckland's housing development situation. Some personal items had been found from boots to ammunition. A large hole had been excavated around the main crash area giving easy access, but now was mostly filled with water. All around, fragments of aluminum mostly molten in form, could be seen, mixed with surrounding clay. Photos taken the next day after the crash, were found on line, and showed the devastation of the wreckage and the house that had been shifted off its foundations adjacent to the crash site. It was a sad reflection of a past and a nearly forgotten incident, that has no memorial or historic reference, that was about to be turned into a housing project for the future. Eleven lives were lost. What were their missions? History may one day tell us. Share what you know on this incident, and find historic online sites that seek testimonies for generational and historic values.

I would like to thank those that have paid their subs and those whom choose to pay using online banking. Receipts are available on request. Subs for 2018 are now due. Brian.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/western-leader/97452061/world-war-ii-crash-explored-as-part-of-the-auckland-heritage-festival>

[file:///C:/NZAAPoster2017-Brassey-Bickler-Best-Piper_Jarrett%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/NZAAPoster2017-Brassey-Bickler-Best-Piper_Jarrett%20(1).pdf)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/archivesnz/34304244914/in/photostream/>

SUBS; A reminder that payment of subs (still only \$25/yr, \$30 1st year for new members) are now due. Jan to Dec r finance period Can you please make sure, especially if you are paying on-line, that you include your name with the payment action (in the reference or particulars section) and what the payment is for. If in doubt, check with our Treasurer.

Bank Account number 06-0317-0224109-00.

Cheques are payable to the RAeS Hwith many choosing to do this online banking/branch.

HUGH McCARROLL Branch Chairman

WARWICK JONES Vice-Chmn mobile 027-307-5308

BRIAN SUNDERLAND; Hon/Sec-Treasurer RAeS, Hamilton Branch.

E-mail: tribri@maxnet.co.nz Ph.no. (07) 843-8308 mobile 0211303379

Website: <http://www.raes.org.nz/home>

Alan's APRIL Jottings

More and more we are seeing tasks once carried out hands-on by trained personnel in various organisations, now being done remotely from another location or by fully automated devices equipped with artificial intelligence. The reasons for this appear to be the reducing numbers of personnel available, greater accuracy in carrying out tasks and getting those tasks done far more quickly and cheaply. The Republic of Singapore Air Force is one such organisation trialing these systems, using drones for runway inspections and damage assessment.

Pre- and post-flight inspections of aircraft using high-resolution cameras mounted in aircraft shelters and programmed to detect damage, missing items, unlatched panels, etc, could reduce turn-round time. There are some aircraft tasks however only personnel can carry out such as preparing the cockpit, loading weapons, replenishing fluids and gases, repacking or replacing drag-chutes, but tasks requiring only a visual inspection could well be done by automated devices.

While on the subject of the Republic of Singapore Air Force, it is my understanding that Paya Lebar air base (once Singapore's international airport) is to be decommissioned, Changi East is being rebuilt and Tengah air base is to be enlarged to the west, probably to accommodate the aircraft from Paya Lebar after it closes.

Recent suggestions that China is interested in moving closer in our direction by having a military base in the Pacific islands should be making our government sit up and take notice. Not only should it be concerned it should be seriously looking at increasing our under-manned and under-equipped military forces. With several countries increasingly flexing their military muscles and expanding beyond their national borders, our government should be acting swiftly to re-equip our military, including an air combat wing, in order for us to reinforce our allies, instead of relying on them, and to show our allies we take our defence seriously (as we once did).